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APPRENTICESHIP POLICY AND GUIDANCE

JULY 2022

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ITEM NO.	SUBJECT	PAGE
1.	Introduction	3
2.	Definition	3
3.	Public Sector Target	4
4.	Access To Apprenticeship Levy Funds	4
5.	Apprenticeship Pay	7
6.	Termination of Contract	8
7.	Equality Impact Assessment and Monitoring	8
8.	Data Protection	8

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In April 2017 the Government introduced an Apprenticeship Levy, with the objective of creating three million new apprenticeship starts by 2020. The Apprenticeship Levy can be drawn on by all UK employers to fund the cost of training and assessment of apprenticeships, however the levy is only payable by certain UK employers with a pay bill of more than £3 million and is deducted monthly on a percentage of the organisation's payroll bill on a PAYE basis.

2. DEFINITION

2.1 What is an apprenticeship

An apprenticeship is a way for young people and adult learners to earn while they learn in a real job, gaining a real qualification and skills for the future. Depending on the sector and job role, an apprenticeship can take anything between one and five years to complete. It is a package of training and qualifications. Key features include:

- Must be employed in a real job - they may be an existing employee or a new hire.
- Must work towards an approved apprenticeship standard to develop new skills.
- Training must last at least 12 months, but any contract needs to be at least a year and a day.
- Must spend at least 20% of time undertaking off the job training. This can include work-based learning.

2.2 Part Time Apprentices

The minimum duration of each apprenticeship is based on the apprentice working 30 hours a week or more, including the off-the-job training they undertake. If the apprentice works fewer than 30 hours a week the provider must extend the minimum duration of the apprenticeship (pro rata) to take this into account. This will also apply to any temporary period of part-time working.

Where a part-time working pattern is needed, the extended duration of the apprenticeship must be agreed by the apprentice, the line manager and the provider.

Where part-time working is agreed, the provider must:

- record the agreed average number of hours each week
- evidence why this working pattern is needed
- extend the minimum duration using the following formula:
- $12 \times 30 / \text{average weekly hours} = \text{new minimum duration in months}$

3. PUBLIC SECTOR TARGET

- 3.1 As part of the apprenticeship reform, prescribed groups and public sector bodies with 250 or more staff in England had a target to employ at least 2.3% of their staff as new apprentice starts over the period of 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2022

The target period has now ended however, public sector employers who were required to report against the public sector apprenticeships target are asked to continue to gather, and later report:

- new apprenticeship starts
- total number of apprentices
- organisational headcount

4. ACCESS TO THE APPRENTICESHIP LEVY FUNDS

- 4.1 From April 2017, an Apprenticeship Levy deduction has been paid into the council's online Digital Apprenticeship Service account. In addition, the government contribute a percentage towards this figure. Human Resources will be responsible for ensuring any apprenticeship payments to apprenticeship providers are set up accordingly and will authorise any payments and monitor the Digital Apprenticeship Service account.

4.2 Apprenticeship Request

Line managers, in consultation with Human Resources will be responsible for identifying apprenticeship opportunities in their teams. Where an opportunity has been identified, the line manager must consult with Human Resources to identify the most appropriate apprenticeship standard available. Only approved apprenticeship standards can be used to draw on funds from the apprenticeship levy. Should there be an over subscription of apprenticeship requests, priority will be given to areas considered difficult to recruit to or difficult to retain staff by the Head of Governance and Business Support.

4.3 Off the job training

It is a requirement that all apprentices must spend at least 20% of their time in off-the-job training. Off-the-job training is defined as learning which is undertaken outside of the normal day to day working environment and leads towards the achievement of the apprenticeship. This can include training that is delivered at the apprentice's normal place of work but must not be delivered as part of their normal working duties.

The off-the-job training must be directly relevant to the apprenticeship standard as outlined below:

Off-the-job training must:

- be planned, reviewed and evaluated jointly between the apprentice and a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager
- allow access as and when required by the apprentice either to a tutor, teacher, mentor or manager
- be delivered during contracted working hours
- be delivered through one or more of the following methods:
- The teaching of theory (for example: lectures, role playing, simulation exercises, online learning or manufacturer training).
- Practical training: shadowing; mentoring; industry visits and attendance at competitions.
- Learning support and time spent writing assessments/ assignments.
- be formally recorded, either in a diary or workbook, and be verified by a timesheet.

Off-the-job training does not include:

- English and maths (up to level 2 / new GCSE 9-4 / old GCSE A*-C), where the assessment plan states that the individual must either have achieved this level or gain it during their apprenticeship.
- Progress reviews or on-programme assessments needed for an apprenticeship framework or standard
- Training which takes place outside the apprentice's normal working hours (this cannot count towards the 20% off-the-job training)

The apprentice is responsible for keeping a record of time spend on off the job training. This can be done by recording time on a timesheet or another acceptable means the apprenticeship provider has in place.

It will be the responsibility of the line manager to review and agree with the apprenticeship provider all time required to undertake the apprenticeship prior to the apprenticeship being approved.

The line manager will also be responsible for ensuring that the employee have sufficient supported to enable them to complete their apprenticeship and enough time is given which will allow them to meet the necessary 20% off the job training needed as part of the apprenticeship standard.

4.4 **Maths and English**

Apprenticeship standards, as outlined above, contain minimum English and maths requirements. Where apprentices do not meet these requirements at entry they will be required to undertake English and/or maths tuition and take the appropriate qualification/s as part of the Apprenticeship programme.

Apprentices will be required to undertake English and/or maths tuition in addition to the 20% block of time allowed for off-the-job training. Apprentices will be allowed reasonable time in works time to attend any additional tuition arranged through the apprenticeship provider to help them achieve the necessary standards. This must be agreed in advance with their line manager.

4.5 **Apprenticeship Agreement**

The apprentice will be required to complete and agree an Apprenticeship Agreement which will be provided by the training provider, which includes a commitment statement outlining specific elements that relate to the apprenticeship they are undertaking, e.g. title of the apprenticeship, start date, expected end date, provider details, employer details and employee details.

4.6 End of Point Assessment

An end-point assessment is a holistic assessment of the knowledge, skills and behaviours which have been learnt throughout an apprenticeship standard. The requirements for end-point assessment are set out in the assessment plan for the specific apprenticeship standard. Apprentices will not be able to achieve an apprenticeship standard without satisfying all the requirements of the assessment plan, including the end-point assessment.

Human Resources will, in consultation with the line manager and apprenticeship provider, ensure an end of point assessment is in place for the apprentice.

5. APPRENTICESHIP PAY

5.1 Existing Staff

Where an existing member of staff is enrolled on an apprenticeship programme they would remain on their current terms and conditions, just as they do when other training is undertaken.

5.2 New Apprenticeship Positions

The apprenticeship Levy is only available to cover the cost of any approved apprenticeship standard identified as suitable for an employee or future vacancy. Any associated salary costs and expenses must be met by the employing section following standard procedure including a written Officer Delegation Report where appropriate.

All apprenticeship positions will be subject to formal Job Evaluation assessment the same as any other position. However, where a position has been identified as a true apprenticeship opportunity, i.e. with no previous experience or relevant qualifications the Council may appoint on National Minimum Wage for an apprentice as set out in the Pay Policy Statement.

Apprentices are entitled to the apprentice rate if they're either:

- aged under 19
- aged 19 or over and in the first year of their apprenticeship

Apprentices are entitled to the minimum wage for their age if they both:

- are aged 19 or over
- have completed the first year of their apprenticeship

6. TERMINATION OF CONTRACT

- 6.1 Should an employee leave the councils employment, Human Resources will make contact with the apprenticeship provider to stop payments towards the cost of the apprenticeship. Unlike other formal qualifications funded by the Council, there can be no recovery of apprenticeship costs should the apprentice leave during or at any time after completing their apprenticeship.
- 6.2 **The end of Apprenticeship Training/Fixed Term Contract**
- Apprentices employed in fixed term posts will be provided with information, advice and guidance, to endeavour to help them find suitable employment at the end of their contract.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING

- 7.1 The operation of this policy will be monitored for its impact on different equality groups in line with the Equality Act 2010. This will enable the Council to assess whether any differences have an adverse impact on a particular group, such that further action would be required.

8. DATA PROTECTION

- 8.1 In implementing this policy, the Council will ensure that any personal data relating to the application of this policy will be obtained, processed and destroyed in line with Data Protection requirements.